

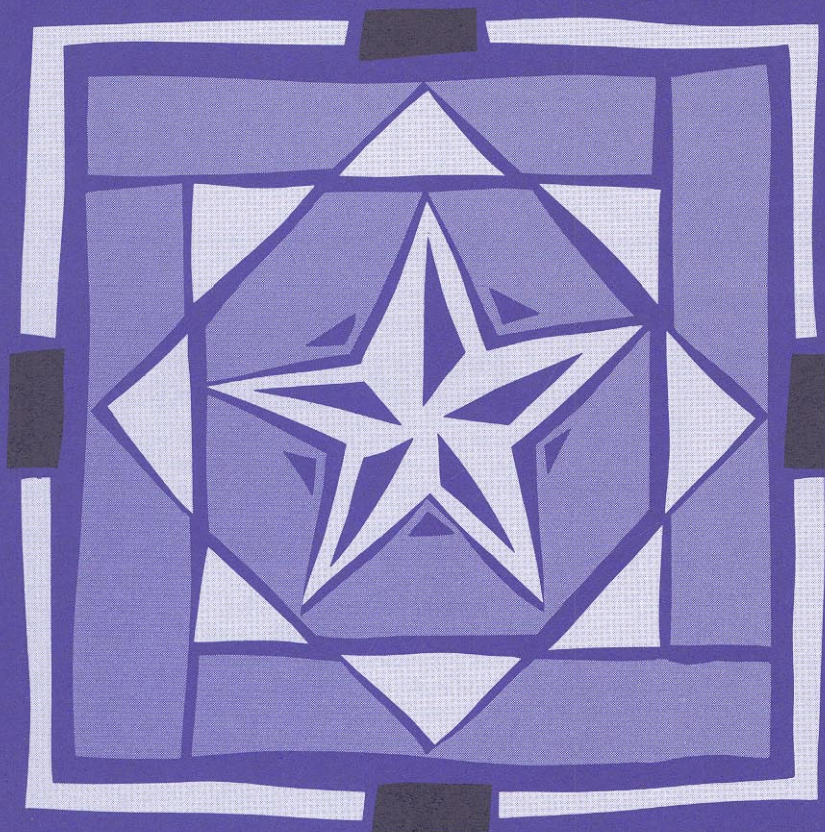
CTR

COMMUNITY TELEVISION REVIEW

A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF LOCAL CABLE PROGRAMMERS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1991

VOLUME 14, NO. 4



VOICES OF DEMOCRACY

CELEBRATING THE FIRST AMENDMENT

CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

CTR

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1991
VOLUME 14, NUMBER 4

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About This Issue: A Reason for Celebration

This issue of CTR originally started out to be one on community organizing, but instead has become one about an organized community, a group of some 800 community media advocates who met this summer on the banks of the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon for the annual convention of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers.

The convention theme was **Voices of Democracy: Celebrating the First Amendment**, echoing our very existence as facilitators of democratic communications. It soon became apparent in Portland that to do justice to a conference follow-up and an issue on community organizing within CTR's page restraints would be to do justice to neither. And as it is, the most we can do is offer only a taste of those few days together in late July.

Perhaps it was that Northwest air, the *joie de vivre* that some of us who live elsewhere have come to associate with the Northwest, the collaborations with the like-minded National Association of Media Arts Centers, or maybe it was the immediacy of the conference, the information shared, or the sense of genuine community and renewal it spawned.

Whatever the reasons, it is a conference well worth remembering on these pages, a task made significantly easier by Paula Manley and her staff at Tualatin Valley Community Access in Beaverton, Oregon, who provided transcripts (disk and hard copy) of the Voices of Democracy speakers, and by CTR Sys Ops Dave Suwal, whose trusty Nikon traveled with him and whose pictures you'll see gracing this issue.

Thanks to all!

- Martha Schmidt
Editor-in-Chief

- Tim Goodwin
Managing Editor

An NFLCP Editorial Response

Sharon B. Ingraham

Past Chairperson, NFLCP

The following editorial was requested by Multichannel News in June. It was written in response to a recent report on Hate Programming on Cable issued by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Localism, diversity and freedom of expression are the foundation of this nation's communications policy. For thousands of Americans, the opportunities afforded by Public, Educational and Government (P-E-G) Access have directly and personally extended these principles to television, the most powerful communications medium of our time.

The National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) was founded in 1976 to promote the development of local programming on cable television. Community groups and individuals from 2,000 communities now produce over 15,000 hours of programming each week. In many communities, P-E-G access programming exceeds the locally produced output of all broadcast TV programming combined. P-E-G programming community television in the truest sense, ranges from the coverage of local government and school boards, to the service of specific constituencies such as seniors, children, minorities and the handicapped.

Along with the thousands of hours of positive, community-oriented programming has come the small, but distinct, voice of hate. In spite of the fact that this programming constitutes significantly less than 1 percent of total access programming, it receives a great deal of attention. In its recent report on hate programming and access channels, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith catalogues the number of cities in which hate programming has appeared. While controversial programs undoubtedly cause anxiety and bring out fear, few programs have been found to violate the law. The politics of hate, whether used by members of extremist groups or by our own politicians during election time are reprehensible, but not illegal. If and when hate programming crosses the line between ideas and actions, and it rarely does, law enforcement authorities can and should take action where laws have been broken.

The ADL lists several potential responses to hate programming. Two are employed successfully by communities facing controversial programming, including counterprogramming and local representation for all programs. NFLCP has found that in communities where education, discussion and humanistic programs are implemented—a response to hate, the voices of prejudice are reduced to being simply one of many. The values which most of us share become the real focus of discussion. In fact, many of the communities listed in the ADL report have successfully faced hate programming, without censorship and without limiting their valuable public access channels.

Other responses must be approached with caution, such as frequency of appearance, time of day and excluding all programming produced outside of the community. In a First Amendment forum, one must be careful to write content-neutral scheduling rules and an access center faces legal risks when it discriminates on the basis of content. The ADL accurately points out that bans on programming produced outside the community deprive local subscribers from hundreds of programs that they may feel are of interest to the community.

NFLCP vigorously opposes the suggestion that cable operators actively pursue "community access" when negotiating with municipalities. Community access has no legal definition. Although ADL states that it would allow operators to refuse controversial shows, who will define controversial? Who will ensure that diverse segments of the community are trained to produce and receive channel time? NFLCP has learned from practical experience that hate programs would be only one of many programs that would disappear from community channels. Once a public access channel has been created, eliminating it provides the grounds for serious legal challenges by the public.

In contrast, in its 1988 study entitled *Bigotry and Cable TV*, the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence concluded that public access must be preserved as a First Amendment tool to fight hate and prejudice. Similarly, at a 1988 forum co-sponsored by NFLCP and the American Jewish Committee, participants reinforced the importance of the First Amendment.

The NFLCP, the ADL, the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence all provide excellent tools and resources for communities to use when dealing with controversial programming. These tools are important to use not only when controversial programming appears on the channel, but before any such occurrence so that citizen, government and operators alike are well informed and less likely to fear the impact of such programming. In July, NFLCP will be releasing its new handbook "Controversial Programming: A Guide for Public, Education and Government Access Television Advocates". (See back cover.

As localism and diversity are left behind by most of the American television media, one of the few places left for free and open expression by a diversity of voices is P-E-G access. Even PBS channels are questioning whether or not to continue local production.

When Congress passed the Cable Act in 1984, it explicitly protected PEG channels from editorial control by cable operators. Just last year, Congress praised the achievements of P-E-G access in the report accompanying cable legislation. The House Telecommunications Subcommittee stated:

The Committee believes that P-E-G access programming is an important complement to local, commercial and noncommercial broadcasting to ensure that the government's compelling interest in fostering diversity and localism, providing educational and informational programming and promoting the underlying values of the First Amendment, are advanced by cable television. It has been demonstrated that where P-E-G channels exist, these interests have been well served.

The Senate Subcommittee on Communications found that:

Leased access and public access programming uniquely allow individuals and groups to communicate their messages to the general public. Educational access allows local schools to supplement classroom learning and to reach out to teach those who are beyond school age or unable to attend classes. The governmental channel allows for "multi-C-SPAN", thus contributing to an informed electorate, essential to the proper functioning of government. These governmental interests in a free market of ideas and an informed and well educated citizenry certainly qualify as sufficiently important to pass the first hurdle of the O'Brien incidental burden test.

In his book *Free Speech and Its Relation to Self-Government*, author Alexander Meiklejohn quotes Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis:

To courageous self-reliant men, with confidence in the power of free and fearless reasoning applied through the process of popular government, no danger flowing from speech can be deemed clear and present, unless the incidence of the evil apprehended is so imminent that it may befall before there is opportunity for free discussion. If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehood and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence.

The problem in our society is not the free and open forum which public access channels provide, the problem is prejudice. We must use the access channels as a means of fighting hate and educating our communities about the consequences of hate. How sad it would be if voices of a few silence the voices of many.

Sharon B. Ingraham is the immediate Past Chairperson of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. She is also Managing Partner of Brewster Ingraham Consulting Group in Acton, Massachusetts, 508-897-3937.

Deep Dish Celebrates 20 Years of Community TV

Deep Dish TV announces its 1991 FALL SEASON, a video celebration of the 20th Anniversary of public access and community television. Beginning October 1 and continuing through December 19, Deep Dish TV will transmit via satellite a selection of the best grassroots community uses of public access from across the country.

Offered this Fall through Deep Dish TV are:

Special Live Presentations

On October 31st (9-11pm ET) Deep Dish TV presents *Slow Death in the Cities*, a town hall meeting on urban environmental issues. Representatives from environmental organizations, the science community, the EPA, Congress, urban planners and members of industry discuss deregulation and more. Radio simulcast on community stations across the country by Pacifica Radio. Viewers and listeners are invited to Call-in using a toll-free number.

War Toys Teach In. Join the War Resisters League, teachers, parents and children in a teach-in on the campaign to stop war toys. Includes alternatives to toy weaponry and the typical warfare of Saturday morning TV. Transmitted Live on November 12 from Cambridge Community TV in Massachusetts.

We Interrupt This Schedule to Bring You... A live performance produced for *A Day Without Art*, a national day of action and mourning coinciding with World AIDS Day. Transmitted LIVE on Sunday December 1, 1991 (3-4pm ET).

Paper Tiger Anniversary Series

To celebrate its 10th myth-smashing year of production, Paper Tiger TV is presenting a selection of their work through the Deep Dish Distribution Cooperative. This ten-part series is being sponsored by the Wexner Center of Columbus OH which is concurrently hosting a ten year retrospective of Paper Tiger.

The Paper Tiger series will include:

- *Operation Storm the Media*

- *Herb Schiller Reads the New York Times: "712 Pages of Waste"*
- *Born to Be Sold: The Strange Case of Baby M*
- *Renee Tajima Reads Asian Images in American Films*
- *Unpacking Ted Koppel's Revolution in a Box*

A Sampler of Independent and Grassroots Programming. An assortment of work by workshop participants are featured in *Teaching TV: Video Production in the Schools*.

Fear of Disclosure: Mujeres Latinas. Focuses on the impact of AIDS on Latino communities and the heroic response of five women activists.

Idiot Box Savant. A video survey of the most innovative uses of access in the land.

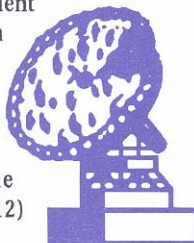
Unbalancing the News. Citizen video activists challenge the mainstream news and redefine the "news" as a practical means for social critique, resistance, and democratic participation.

Satellite Transmission Schedule

Except for *Slow Death in the Cities* and *We Interrupt This Schedule To Bring You...*, all transmissions are on Satcom 4, transponder 22. Beginning October 1 through December 19, transmissions are scheduled on Tuesdays from 6-7 pm ET and Thursdays from 2-3 pm ET. Programs are free of charge to access centers and home dish owners.

PAPER TIGER TV, the media collective that founded Deep Dish TV, is a pioneer in the creation and evolution of media criticism and analysis. DEEP DISH TV, the first grassroots satellite network, is a recognized leader in the movement for independent democratic television in the United States.

Deep Dish TV can be reached at 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012. Phone (212) 473-8933, fax (212) 420-8223.



Local Programming Sought Nationwide

Looking for a larger audience for your access center's local programming? Have some programming ideas you want to share? Several requests for tapes have come in to the CTR offices recently.

■ Bethel Park (PA) Public Access is looking for alternative programming for their channel to highlight what other centers are doing and share program ideas with volunteers. Submissions should be on 3/4" with mixed audio only on channel 2, with channel 1 silent. Tapes returned.

Contact Bryan Rudolph, Bethel Park Public Access Television, 5100 W. Library Ave., Bethel Park, PA 15102, or phone (412) 831-3304.

■ The Public Affairs Office at the Naval Air Station in Point Mugu, CA is looking for tapes about cities and towns across the nation for replay on their closed-circuit television system on base for the sailors and marines stationed there. The base uses VHS, but will accept any format. Returned if requested.

Contact Ray Lucasey, Public Affairs Office, Code 6003, Naval Air Station, Point Mugu, CA 93042-5000, or call (805) 989-1732.

■ Deep Dish TV is seeking proposals and tapes for its 1992 season, which marks the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas. Indigenous organizations have put out a call to counteract these celebrations with activities that commemorate 500 years of indigenous resistance to European invasion and colonization and that shed light on the contemporary struggles of indigenous peoples.

In solidarity with this call, Deep Dish TV will dedicate its 1992 schedule to programming that places the Quincentenary Celebrations in a critical context. Proposals for special projects to be distributed through the Deep Dish Distribution Coop are also being considered.

For contact information and a glimpse of their 1991 Fall Season, see story at left.

■ Others seeking videotapes for replay on their channels should be aware of the Videotape Exchange operated by the NFLCP Far West Region.

The Videotape Exchange: Community Programming Catalogue has some 165 listings available free or at low cost for local cable channels and other non-commercial uses. Cost of the catalogue is \$20 for NFLCP members, \$25 non-members, which includes postage and handling. Expect 4-6 weeks for delivery.

NFLCP members should receive a brochure in the mail soon with details. In the meantime, for further information, contact Ron Cooper at Access Sacramento, 4623 T. St., Sacramento, CA 95819, or call (916) 456-8600.

Fall Regional Conferences, Sites and Dates

REGION	SITE	DATE	CONTACT PERSON, PHONE
NW	Missoula, MT	Sept. 27-29, 1991	Brian Girtman (503) 245-7759
CS	Owensboro, KY	Oct. 17-19, 1991	Judy Crandall (616) 459-4788
NE & MA	Greenfield, MA	Nov. 1-3, 1991	(NE) Rika Welsh (617) 321-6400 (MA) Atif Harden (202) 659-6263
FW & MT	Pasadena, CA	Nov. 25-26, 1991	(FW) Ron Cooper (916) 456-8600 (MT) Fernando Moreno (505) 243-0027

Video Olympics

The 1992 Video Olympics will be held January 6-9, 1992, in Beaufortain (Savoie, France). Over twenty countries and community media organizations will participate in a worldwide conference on cultural identity and alternative television. Among the friends and representatives of the NFLCP attending this event will be George Stoney, panelist for the "Democratisation of Television" forum, and ACTV Cable 21 with the Wexner Center for Visual Arts (both of Columbus, OH) through a satellite link to the Beaufortain conference site.

If you want to attend the 1992 Video Olympics to be held this coming January in France, and need travel/conference information, contact Olivier Pasquet, Coordinator, 1992 Video Olympics, Place de La Mairie, 73270 Beaufort Sur Doron, France. Tel: (33)79 3833 90, fax (33)79 3816 70.

International Update

International Now Standing Committee

The 1990/1991 NFLCP Annual Report documents one of the most exciting transitions and events for the International Committee in the past few years. "International" is now a standing committee of the NFLCP. This means that the International Committee will now be reflected through regional board committees, providing direct representation and greater opportunities for participation on a local level.

Long standing objectives of the International Committee, such as education on the issues surrounding multi-cultural access to media and the promotion of diversity worldwide, may now be effectively realized with the guidance of regional representation. Equally important are those objectives which enhance the exchange of information on the development of community television internationally through videotapes, personal contacts and publications. NFLCP exchange projects may now more easily draw on and be informed by a variety of resources through this new network of regional International Committees.

The 1991/1992 committee year will be an important one concerning long-term NFLCP international objectives and short-term administrative goals for the committee. It will be a time for organizing regional committee structures in a manner which reflect the particular multi-cultural/multi-ethnic concerns of local community.

In order to find out how you can participate, contact the chair of your region and make your in-

terest known. If you are not sure who your NFLCP regional chair is, call the NFLCP headquarters in Washington, DC at (202) 393-2650.

Community Video in Latin America

The introduction of portable and affordable video technology into the marketplace has spawned the development of "popular" video movements throughout Latin America. Thousands of dedicated community producers are making important tapes which are rarely seen outside of the communities in which they were made.

In an effort to promote community video in Latin America, a special competition and touring exhibition of grass roots video made by Latin Americans, *Democracy in Communication: Latin America*, is being sponsored by the NFLCP and organized by Karen Ranucci of International Media Resources Exchange (IMRE). The NFLCP will showcase the selected videos from this competition at a prize ceremony hosted by the NFLCP International Committee at the 1992 annual convention.

This special competition will gather a series of existing works from Central and South America. Those selected will be translated into English and made available for cablecast, at no cost, on public access channels.

If you are interested in helping with the organization and realization of this project, contact Karen Ranucci at IMRE, 124 Washington Place, New York, NY 10014 and/or call (212) 463-0108, fax (212) 243-2007.

Karen Helmerson
International Committee Chair

From the Chair: The Next Stage

After four years of strong and steady leadership under some of the most challenging conditions an organization like ours can face, Sharon Ingraham has stepped down as chair of the NFLCP's national board. As I step up to begin my tenure as chair, I am indebted to that legacy (as we all are), but I am also looking for ways that we can build on Sharon's leadership and move the NFLCP forward to the next stage of its growth.

I am excited to begin my work as chair under promising conditions. As those who joined us in Portland already know, we are coming off one of our most successful annual conventions ever. Attendance hit new heights, the workshops were well-organized and informative, and the special events, such as the "Living the First Amendment" symposium and the two "Cultural Competency" workshops, added extra depth. In addition, the energy created by holding our convention in conjunction with the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers' conference promises new links between our two groups. Many people went out of their way to tell me that they felt more educated and rejuvenated by this year's convention than they had in years. Thanks are due to many who made that success possible, but especially to Paula Manley, the National Board's convention planning chair, and the extraordinary local planning committee, chaired by Julie Omelchuck and the "Chair's 'Right Hand,'" Debbie Luppold, and its subcommittee chairs: Andy Beecher (Local Planning Committee Newsletter); Phyllis Cole (Volunteers); Steve Jolin (Fundraising); Alex Quinn (Local Attendance); Rick Ray (Technical Needs); Rose Reed

(Special Projects) and Jacqueline Schommer (Events). The efforts of this group and those who worked with them have set a new standard of which we should all be proud.

Other convention highlights also bode well for the year ahead. Many were pleased to hear that the burden of debt that the NFLCP has carried in recent years has been erased, replaced by a positive fund balance. Convention attendees sent over a thousand postcards to their Congressional representatives to let them know about the needs of the P-E-G access community. (Public policy chair Carl Kucharski tells me that a number of Congressional offices have responded, looking to learn more about P-E-G access.) And the Board is sure to be invigorated by the talents of our new Board members: Brian Gertman, Julie Omelchuck, Kari Peterson, Mark Sindler, Dorothy Thigpen, David Vogel, and LaMonte Ward. (See new Board list on page 3.) I am looking forward to working with all of them.

With an executive director in place, a stable financial picture, a growing political profile, and a membership renewal rate now over 70%, the NFLCP is well positioned to enter the next stage in its development. I will be counting on working with all NFLCP members to carry the best of the past into a future that we must shape to reflect who we are today: a growing, vibrant community, united by our commitment to community-based communication, ready to meet new challenges and seek new solutions as we "encourage all efforts to increase use of technology to enhance interaction among people and their communities."

Andrew Blau
Chairperson

Trainers Unite!

Over a year ago in Washington, DC, access trainers got together and decided to form a Special Interest Group or "SIG". Trainers felt that if they pooled their collective training information (handouts, training tapes, effective exercises, readings, methods and ideas) all could all benefit. With a "clearinghouse" of materials and names of fellow trainers, trainers could empower themselves and establish some camaraderie.

A committee was formed with Chuck Peterson as coordinator. The group's immediate goal is to mail out a survey to their 40-plus members asking what they have in the way of training materials and what they need, in

hopes of avoiding re-inventing the wheel.

For those already on the list, expect a mailing sometime soon. Plan on around \$10 for dues as required by the NFLCP for official SIG status.

If you want to be involved, you can get on the Training SIG list by contacting Chuck Peterson at GRTV, 50 Library Plaza NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, or call (616) 459-4788.

Other active NFLCP SIGs include Educators, contact Kiki Vassoler, (201) 546-4107; and Small Access, contact Gregg Eppler-Wood, (802) 447-3770.

Other groups interested in creating SIGs or wanting more information should contact Tony Lewis at the national NFLCP office, (202) 393-2650.

Public Policy Update

FCC Changes in Technical Standards

The Federal Communications Commission released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking—"In the Matter of CABLE TELEVISION TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS," MN Docket No. 91-169. This will be the first major change to cable technical standards in more than 20 years. Some of the proposed rules may affect P-E-G Access programming, production and cablecasting. The proposed rules would:

- 1) apply the same technical standards to all classes of conventional NTSC video channels (currently access channels are classified as Class II channels and do not have any technical standards);

- 2) not allow local franchise authorities to impose or enforce standards more stringent than the FCC's standards;

- 3) eliminate channel boundary and convert-er stability requirements in anticipation of HDTV and other new technologies;

- 4) initiate technical standards for color quality (may affect the use of 1/2" VHS, 1/2" Beta and 8mm video);

- 5) expand proof of performance testing requirements for cable system operators to demonstrate compliance with the FCC standards;

- 6) exempt systems serving fewer than 1000 subscribers from the standards except that franchising authorities may set technical standards for these systems which are no more stringent than the FCC's standards.

At this point it is not known whether these proposed rules will affect access. However, the new color signal quality standard may prohibit the use of 1/2" VHS, 1/2" Beta and 8mm video formats.

The NFLCP in its *Comment to the FCC* will certainly point out this issue and request either clarification of the point or exemption for access channels. It would seem inappropriate for the FCC to undermine the "electronic

soapbox" intent of Congress for access channels through the use of technical standards after 20 years of indifference to standards.

Congress takin' the slow road

Elsewhere in Washington, the House and Senate cable bills are *not* on "fast tracks." As of this writing House Bill H.R. 1303 remains in the Telecommunications and Finance subcommittee. Senate Bill S.12 passed the Senate Commerce Committee and awaits scheduling for debate. The retransmission consent provision of S.12 has become a volatile and divisive issue, pitting the National Association of Broadcasters against the National Cable Television Association. You may have seen newspaper ads or cable bill stuffers which proclaim, "The TV Networks will continue to transmit television for free. But they want to tax you 20% when you watch it on cable." The NAB's advertising response is "The cable monopoly's \$10 million ad campaign is raising eyebrows. Not to mention your cable bill," and "Cable TV. Never have so many paid so much so often."

Oh yeah, well my brother can beat up your brother!

Preferred Decision Appealed

On the West Coast, *Preferred Communications, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles*, (C.D. Cal. No. CV83-5846), has been appealed. Earlier this year the district court completed its final judgement which, in part, dealt with access provisions.

In earlier orders, the Court concluded that to survive a constitutional attack, access requirements had to serve a compelling government interest had to be narrowly tailored. On January 5, 1990, the Court issued an order finding that while access channel requirements served compelling government interests, the channel requirements imposed by Los Angeles were not narrowly tailored: Los Angeles had failed to show that it required eight channels—as opposed to fewer channels. On August 24, 1990, the Court issued an order addressing access equipment and facilities re-

Editorial Themes Selected

Themes for Community Television Review in the coming year were chosen at the Editorial Board meeting in Portland.

CTR's November/December issue will look at Access and the First Amendment, followed in order by Access Funding; Big City Access; Independent Producers & Organizations; Long Range Planning & Emerging Technologies; Access & Diversity; and Community Communication Collaborations.

In other business, Lynn Carillo-Cruz, Heidi Mau and Jim Skelly were named to the CTR Editorial Board. They replace outgoing board members Fred Johnson, George Stoney and Randy Van Dalsen.

quirements. In that Order the Court seemed to reverse itself, and say that there was no government interest in promoting access. Accordingly, the Court ruled equipment and facilities requirements were unconstitutional.

The Alliance for Communications Democracy and the City of Los Angeles asked the Court to reconsider the rationale and the results of its August 24 decision which it states that "upon review of the *August 24 Order*, the Court finds that the City's interest in P-E-G programming remains compelling." However, the result did not change. Because the channel requirement was unconstitutional as drafted, it followed that the equipment and facilities requirements were also unconstitutional. "It is not within the constitutional powers of the city to impose additional regulations which further an unconstitutional requirement," the Court stated. The decision leaves Los Angeles free to craft more carefully tailored access requirements for any future franchising process.

On appeal, we expect Preferred to argue that franchising and access requirements are unconstitutional per se. *If the court ruled in favor of Preferred, the decision could affect not just the developing access operation in Los Angeles, but also access operations throughout the ninth circuit (which covers Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Alaska and Hawaii), because the decision would be binding law for every federal court within those states.* (Emphasis added)... The Alliance is considering filing an amicus brief in the Preferred appeal.

Access organizations in the states mentioned above who are not members or supporters of the Alliance for Communications Democracy should contact me at (614) 224-2288 if they wish to support the amicus brief. A year from now, if the appeals court decides this case in favor of Preferred, access could be lost for millions of American citizens!

Carl Kucharski
Public Policy Committee Chair

A Fitting Festival in Portland



Voices presenters at the convention included Maria Rocha and Herb Schiller (top) and Bill Wassmuth and Julian Low.

Deep Dish Covers the Convention

Deep Dish TV Network will kick off its fall '91 season October 1 and 3 with *Voices of Democracy: Living the First Amendment*, video highlights from the symposium given at the NFLCP and NAMAC conferences in July.

Featured will be Maria Rocha, Herbert I. Schiller, Julian Low and Bill Wassmuth, along with video testimonials from people throughout the US, sharing their perspectives on freedom of speech and democracy.

The Deep Dish satellite feed will be available that Tuesday, 6 - 7 pm ET, and Thursday, 2 - 3 pm ET, on Satcom 4, Transponder 22 (F4, trs. 22). Each hour is made up of two half-hour programs that can be shown as individual programs or played back-to-back in a one hour slot.

Editor's note: For a glimpse at the rest of Deep Dish's provocative season, see story on page 3.

"Let's do this one again!" shouted an attendee as he departed the hotel late Saturday evening.

The NFLCP had descended upon Portland in stellar form to attend its 15th anniversary National Convention. The reunions were delightful. The conversations were stimulating. The enthusiasm was contagious. The optimism was inspiring! Even before the opening plenary, compliments for Wednesday's pre-convention seminars could be heard. It clearly appeared that the hard work of the Board and the patience of the membership had paid off—a feeling of renewed vitality and purpose prevailed.

Thursday's principal events were devoted to the recognition of accomplishment over the past year. Congratulations to NFLCP's Best Region and Best Chapter (Far West and Michigan). The most oft repeated praises for any single event seemed to go, fittingly, to the ceremony honoring the work of the ultimate practitioners of our philosophy—community producers from throughout the nation. The Hometown USA Video Awards were unanimously lauded as the best yet with Portland's Performing Arts Center providing an elegant, yet comfortable, setting.

The "Voices of Democracy" audio visual symposium was riveting and the presenters outstanding in both their messages and effect. The event was of significance also because it represents a renewed commitment on our part and on the part of NAMAC to strengthen and expand our collaboration around our common goals. A similar rededication of mutual effort is also underway with Deep Dish. In this period of sundry challenges to our First Amendment ideals, we can't *not* afford to forge such mutually beneficial alliances.

Back to the banks of the Willamette for the Salmon Bake and to the First Amendment Birthday Bash and NAMAC screenings and party, one can easily surmise that we savored the occasion. It was, indeed, a festival. But it was obviously much more. It was a conclave of folks who meant serious business.

The workshops were well attended and received. Many conversations 'round and about the facility focused upon the future of access and the organization—the "what" and the "how"? There was an almost universal sense of controlled ur-

gency about the issues addressed and the deliberations conducted.

The business conducted by our Delegates and our Board included the election of new board members and officers. Welcome to Brian, David, Dorothy, Julie, Kari, LaMonte and Mark. Congratulations to Andrew and Fernando. To the 90-91 Board, and especially to Sharon, Jewel, Barbara, Jack, Ann and John, thanks for your courageous leadership.

On a personal note, like the many people who have contacted me, I have just descended from the "high" of the event. As I recall the faces and conversations of Portland, I am reminded of the work done by Jewel, Sharon, Carl and so many others to expand the diversity, funding base and political stability of our organization and cause. I remain evermindful of the work remaining to be done. This was my initial opportunity to meet and talk with so many of those that I had been appointed to

serve. And talk I did. While roving about the facility at all hours (some quite odd), I never failed to meet with a conversation about member services, suggestions for future plans, funding strategies or local issues. It was an educational opportunity par excellence.

I was also faced with an ethical dilemma on many occasions—should I absorb the voluminous and take full credit for the possible record attendance and overall rousing success of the Convention or should I come clean. I came clean, and feel privileged to repeat that round of thanks to Sharon Ingraham and Paula Manley and the 90-91 National Board; Julie Omelchuck and the Local Planning Committee; Phyllis Cole and her army of volunteers; to Jean, Sonnie and Sarah at Meeting Points; Sue Buske; Harve Horowitz; NAMAC; to all of our sponsors, exhibitors and contributors; to Reginald and Ayoka in the National Office; and to each and every one of the Regions, producers, members and attendees.

Finally, to that enthusiastic conventioneer desiring a repeat, we must not do that. What we will do, however, is prepare for an even more successful meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota next year. In the meantime, enjoy the reminiscences in this issue.

T. Andrew Lewis
Executive Director



While it's impossible to condense a five-day convention in the few pages here, we hope we can leave you with at least a timely taste of some of the things that transpired this summer in Portland. On the following pages, we've managed to present excerpts of some, though regrettably not all, of the presenters' remarks at the Voices of Democracy Symposium, and photos and shorts of some of the events that occurred.

Free Speech in the '90s: Myths and Realities...

Norman Solomon

Author and Journalist

Journalist Norman Solomon is co-author of the critically acclaimed book, Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media, which has been hailed as "an essentially tool for fighting corporate domination of the media."

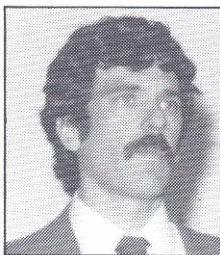
For more than a decade, Solomon's articles about the news media, nuclear weapons, and U.S.-Soviet relations have appeared in dozens of major newspapers and magazines. During eight visits to Moscow during the Gorbachev era, Solomon reported for Pacifica Radio National News. In 1988 he was the Washington representative for the media watchdog organization Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR).

Presented during the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers/National Alliance of Media Artists Symposium in Portland, OR, July 27, 1991

One of the demonstrations that got very little coverage during the recent war on Iraq happened in New York when 1,200 people marched between the various headquarters of the television networks. I imagine there are a few of those people here today. At one of the stops along the trail, a few people took it upon themselves to burn a television set and I understand that incident has given Jesse Helms an idea for a new constitutional amendment. Something about solid state. I don't know.

For all kinds of atrocities to become possible, as people in Iraq have learned all too well and continue to learn as they die today from the longer term results of the US bombing, when language is destroyed, all kinds of misdeeds and cruelties become not only possible but widely accepted. And we might call the abuse of words, the destructions of words as an instrument of meaning, we might call it "linguicide" and we are awash, we are in danger of drowning in linguicide. Us and the trees and the valleys and the other species. And when our mass media tell us that the Saudi government is a moderate government, that would come as a surprise to the hundreds of tortured victims inside Saudi prisons who are there for their political beliefs. An interesting experience: to be tortured by moderates.

At the rate things are going we will be told that the moderate position will be to propose a compromise on certain First Amendment issues. Modify it just a little bit like "Congress shall not make a lot of laws, etc." and then maybe we could have a new name to the lead off of the Bill of Rights, we could call it "The First Half Amendment." Now in that case and in that kind of progression, the psychology of framing in the United



States news media, the tempest in the teapots, the debates within narrow assumptions that dominate the tubes and the printed press. Radicals would be those who advocate seven-eighths of a First Amendment. That would have a certain ring to it....

When we have this kind of environment in which we work, we have degraded standards, and I think some of the most pernicious news media today in this country are so called non-commercial broadcasts. You know the operative euphemism is "underwriters." We used to just call them sponsors. And in speaking of degraded standards, I think we have to keep in mind that only in that kind of environment could we treasure a news channel such as National Public Radio and American Public Radio, and public broadcasting, particularly in the daily news coverage. When you have a situation where, *All Things Considered*, a *Morning Edition* and the *MacNeil Lehrer News Hour* had the pom-poms out to cheerlead this war, the mask fell and we saw some of the underlying roles involved.

Sometimes I'm asked "Who do you think is better: Peter Jennings or Tom Brokaw or Dan Rather or Robert MacNeil or Jim Lehrer?" and I say, "Well, what do you think's better? Camels or Winstons or Salems?" There's a difference, difference in taste, difference in style. There might even be a difference in the deadliness, the nicotine quotient. But let's not fool ourselves about the underlying function. The great philosopher Marx, and I can't remember if it was Karl or Groucho, said that the history of humanity is the history of consciousness. And that's part of our dilemma today because on the one hand the real challenge and real opportunity for us is the leap of consciousness, individual and collective, at the same time we can't afford to nurture the consciousness change.

The marketplace of ideas concept is based on one dollar, one vote. And the people, people who are not wealthy, those who do not have their hands and their elbows on the levers of power, they will always lose those kinds of votes. We know what we have is not so much free speech as very expensive speech. We see all too well what can happen when the First Amendment remains on the books while it is being gutted in practice. Walter Lippman said a long time ago, as he put it, "The freedom to speak can never be maintained merely by objecting to interference with the liberty of the press, of printing, of broadcasting, of the screen. It can be maintained only by promoting debate."

I think A. J. Leibling got a lot closer to the truth when he said that freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one. And we know that's true about freedom of transmitters as well, and cable systems. I don't need to detail to this audience the attack on public access television in this country. I've been talking to people in Phoenix and New York and right here in Portland where those corporations, large and small, and we know they are usually very large, that made the promises in the 1970s and the early and mid-1980s when they wanted to get their franchises and cut their deals with governments, they are now trying to renege

Convention Materials Available

Audio Cassettes

Miss a key session? Want to share one with others? Audio tapes from most of the pre-convention and convention sessions are available from North Pacific Recording, Inc.

Individual tapes run from \$5 to \$8 depending on the number ordered, plus shipping charges of \$1 per tape (\$2 minimum and \$15 maximum shipping). Storage albums are included with four or more tapes, or available for purchase.

For more information, contact North Pacific Recording, Inc. at PO Box 451, Fairview, OR 97024-0451, or call (503) 661-6819.

Vision Papers

The four vision papers presented at the 1991 convention will be available soon from the Alliance for Communications Democracy.

Vision Paper presenters included Andrew Blau, *Connecting the Disconnected*; Dee Dee Halleck, *History & Vigilance in the Age of the Camcorder*; Dirk Koning, *Socialized Media*; and Tom Karwin, *Examining the Dimensions of Public Access*.

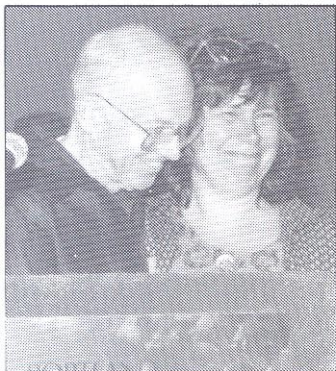
To find out more, contact the national NFLCP office.

Convention T-Shirts

The good news for those who missed them, is that they've been reprinted.

The stylish 3-color shirts, with the logo on this issue's cover, are available for \$15 each, which includes shipping and handling. Available in gray or black, sizes range from small to XX-large.

To get yours, send check to NFLCP, POB 27290, Washington, DC 20038-7290. Deadline October 31. No late orders accepted. The T-shirts will be shipped the second week of November, in plenty of time for Holiday gift giving.



George Stoney (left) congratulates Dee Dee Halleck, this year's recipient of the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication.

Community Communications Awards 1991

One of the highlights of the NFLCP convention is the Community Communications Awards recognizing excellence in community television by individuals and organizations. The 1991 convention continued the tradition.

Awards and their recipients for 1991 are:

Public Access. Tucson Community Cable Corporation.

Institutional Access. Channel 35, The Phoenix Channel.

Best Region. Far West

Best Chapter. Michigan.

Buske Leadership. Gerry Field, Somerville, MA.

George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication. Dee Dee Halleck.

The 1991 convention introduced the Gilbertson Honor Roll, to recognize the significant contributions of local advocates of community television. Named for the late Knoxville, Tennessee activist Peggy Gilbertson, the Honor Roll will announce its first inductees at next year's conference. Look for application forms in the spring.

and this is a battle that we know has to be fought if public access is going to be increased rather than reduced.

I think that the attack on cable access needs to be put in the broader context of an attack on access to mass communication. After the Gulf War in early May, the top Washington editors of 15 of the largest and most powerful news media in this country sent a letter to Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, and of course there's a great linguistic word for you, "Defense Secretary," and they be-moaned and released to the press a letter in which they said that the Pentagon had imposed reprehensible restrictions on the media during the Gulf War which made it very difficult for them to do a good job of journalism. As that letter was released I had to think about how slick these institutions are, to learn how to scapegoat the military industrial complex for self censorship by another part of the military industrial complex, or what has now been called more and more the military industrial media complex. Sure, the Pentagon restrictions were outrageous—more extreme than those imposed during World War II. But they were great scapegoats, they were great lightning rods to draw attention away from the rigorous self-censorship that was imposed by the news media, from the commercial networks to PBS to NPR. And when we look at the self-censorship it's clear that no Pentagon regulation forced the media to refer to the missiles that were fired on urban areas of Iraq, Basra, Baghdad and elsewhere, no Pentagon directives forced the media to refer to those missiles as "technological marvels" while they referred to the relatively few scud missiles that landed in Israel as "weapons of terror." If a missile goes to an urban area it doesn't have an ideology, it's a weapon of terror or it's a technological marvel, but it can't be both.

When the media watchdog FAIR conducted a study of the first two weeks of the war coverage on the networks, the three commercial networks in the evening broadcasts, they found that there were 878 sources used in commenting on the war. Sound bites and so forth. Out of those 878, a total of one was a leader of a national peace group in this country. We have a great myth that a free press, a free media, equals a privately owned press, a privately owned media. It's a very useful myth that serves useful purposes. We saw many generals on television during the war but the most important general was General Electric—without disclaimers from Tom Brokaw to acknowledge those who signed his paycheck made money every time a missile was fired, every time civilians were incinerated. That would be too much full disclosure.

I think GE has an appropriate symbol as the owners of NBC which they acquired by obtaining RCA. Remember the old RCA Victor labels on the records with the dog with his ear cocked to the sounds of the Victrola and underneath his master's voice. We know that the news media are supposed to serve as watchdogs for the powers that be. We know that they function much more as lap dogs. And we get confused sometimes because there seems to be a

bit of debate, that debate I think, often could be described as running along the lines of what we saw on the MacNeil Lehrer News Hour two weeks into the war. Jim Lehrer said, "And now we're going to hear a wide ranging discussion" and I thought, "Finally. It's been two weeks in the war" and then he finished his sentence, "about when to start the ground war." Welcome to open debate brought to you by, in that case, AT&T and Pepsico.

If we're going to deal with the essence of media criticism rather than the false issues that are put forward by the mass media themselves, I think we need to ask the time honored question, "Who benefits? Who profits?" We can talk about GE and NBC and the fact that in 1989 they cleared almost two million dollars in Pentagon contracts for weapon systems used in the Gulf war. We can rattle off the alphabet soup of the weapon systems that they helped produce: F16, F14, F17, F5, etc. etc.

But what about the other networks. One of them is controlled by Lawrence Tisch, tobacco tycoon. ABC has as its Chair of Cap Cities ABC someone who's on the board of Texaco. You can trust your war coverage to the man who wears the star, I guess. CBS Board includes directors from Honeywell and the Rand Corporation and so people in glass penthouses can't throw stones at NBC. Running the gamut from A to B is such that when we look at the international affairs coverage on the MacNeil Lehrer News Hour we get an interesting picture. And this is generic to all of the major broadcast media what has been called the Kissinger-Haig disease, the rotation, the wheel of guests, the Rolodex syndrome, but when the FAIR organization (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting) commissioned a major study by sociologists at Boston College of the MacNeil Lehrer News Hour, they looked for six straight months at every night's programming, and I use the word programming in more than a singular sense, and they found that the United States guests on the MacNeil Lehrer News Hour discussing international affairs were 94% white, 94% male and fully 67% present or former United States government officials. How's that for separation between press and state? And what are some of the messages of these statistics? Six seats out of 100 for women, six seats out of 100 for people of color. The message is that it's a white man's world out there, or at least should be.

One of the main problems with our mass media, I think, could be described as "white noise." White noise in a dual sense. It's constant, it might be loud, very little variation and one of its effects is to make it very difficult to get a word in edgewise from other sources. And, of course, there's a second sense in which it's white noise. It's generated overwhelmingly by Caucasians and it brings to mind the statement shortly before he was murdered by Martin Luther King when he spoke about "the reality, the western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach and nothing to learn" manifested for us day after day. The First Amendment's being almost drowned out by corporate sponsored white noise. And whether you look at the MacNeil

Lehrer News Hour with AT&T and Texaco or you look at Washington Week & Review, which I think should be renamed White Washington Week & Review sponsored by Ford and Ford Aerospace, we find that the most powerful ostensibly non-commercial news media serve a very important function, particularly because they are targeted at certain demographics in this democracy that we live in, certain demographics that are seen as key to the opinion shapers and molders. Yes, we do have the best news media that money can buy and one of the great frauds of this year has been the political correctness issue.

We've heard alot about sensible PC totalitarians running around campuses and yet we hear almost nothing about the truth of PC enforcement in this country. The true PC enforcers are not on the campuses. The true PC enforcers are in the executive suites of places like CBS and ABC and NBC and the New York Times and the Washington Post. Those are the PC enforcers. A single column in Newsweek by George Will used the word "radicals" five times to describe the PC problem. And if there's ever a code word for political correctness in the U.S. news media it's the word "radicals." This is the kind of typical corporate sponsored whiplash that we get. The more that these pundits flog the PC horse the more their own hysteria and intolerance for gaining momentum, they limit increasingly public discourse. In 1991 a litmus test for political correctness, you might say a prerequisite for season tickets to sit around the mass media punditry table, the litmus test is demonstrated and reliable silence about matters that the real PC enforcers don't want addressed. Radicals need not apply. It's as though they are persona non grata in a corporate sponsored game, an immense and rigged game of Jeopardy, with a capital J or a capitalism J, with prepared answers that won't lead to crucial questions such as who controls what and how and for what purpose in our society.

We see a lot of talking heads on network television. We are allowed to see very few talking hearts, especially those which are filled with anger. First Amendment right?

Corporate America is standing on our windpipes and inviting us to speak metaphorically and literally, corporations like Phillip Morris invites you to breathe deep and speak out. The news media and the mass media that they are woven into, and I like Paul Crastner's comment, you know he spoke about that fact that there's not only infotainment but now there disinfotainment. The news media encourage us to be passive about just about everything except going out and buying things and amidst all of the talking heads and the sound bites and the white noise to directly acknowledge and communicate and express our concerns inclusive of our anger, and to talk about how we can respond assertively and collectively. This is beyond the pale of reasonable discussion as defined by the mass media because it might disrupt the numbing process. What Robert J. Lifton has called psychic numbing, this is routine. I think of it as anesthesia

without surgery and it's constant and necessary and that psychic numbing is as requisite a material for going to war as the Pentagon's bombers and tanks and missiles.

For us to feel is to challenge the corporate state particularly if we express the feelings and act upon them. We are constantly encouraged to ask for whom the bell tolls and this is not the question that we need. Journalists are told that the profession should afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. But as in so many other respects the news media are terrific at inversion and what we have in this country is a mass media system that does much more to afflict the already afflicted and comfort the already comfortable.

The recent film documentary "Tongues Untied" laid bare more of what we're dealing with. It is not considered obscene in this country to portray the massacres of hundreds of thousands of people as computerized, graphic blips on the screen. That is not considered improper for viewing. But when a filmmaker with great courage talks about his own experiences in this country, a black, gay man who uses his talents to illuminate experience which is suppressed from the public arena, many PBS affiliates said no thank you. We prefer white noise.

One of the ways I think we can start to fight back in unexplored directions is to stop paying to be propagandized. There might be some kind of similarities to a 12 step process. When we're about to reach for the pen to write that check to the local PBS affiliate and the local NPR affiliate we need to stop and ask ourselves, "What have they been doing?" If they are so eager for tongues to remain tied then maybe we are not eager any longer to help them tie those tongues. There are plenty of other things we can do with the money and one suggestion I'd like to make is that there can be non-profit community boards set up across this country to oversee escrow accounts with benchmark standards that the local PBS and NPR affiliates need to meet or they're not going to get a dime. And in that process we could have those community boards consider applications from independent radio and TV and video producers and dispense the money to begin to subsidize some of the solutions instead of more of the problems.

There are powerful forces in our society that we encounter all the time that sometimes are able very astutely to hide their true identities even as they increase their own clout and power. Very powerful forces that want not only to tie some tongues but to re-tie others. Back to the closet, back to the pedestal, back to the kitchen, back to our silences but we know, we know from first hand experience in households, in working groups that abuses are not stopped by silence. They are stopped by breaking the silence. The First Amendment that is not a dead letter would be a grave threat to those who want to impose and re-impose those silences.

It's true in a household, it's true in a country and the news media have been very good in the United States at encouraging us and teaching and

NAMAC

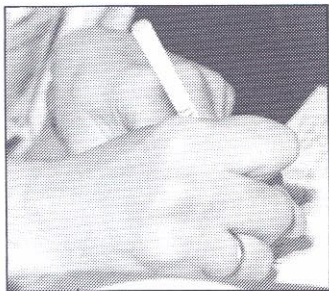
The National Alliance of Media Arts Centers's annual conference, *Burning Issues: Cultural Diversity, Funding, and Freedom of Expression*, was held July 26-28, 1991 in Portland, Oregon. Held simultaneously with the NFLCP, it was, hopefully, just the beginning of a long relationship with the NFLCP. Aside from the workshop and symposium sponsored jointly by NAMAC and the NFLCP, it was exciting to have NFLCP members participate in many of our discussions. These face-to-face opportunities generated many ideas of the sharing of resources and future collaborations.

NAMAC's conference, which was more of a membership convocation, comes at a very important time for the organization. At the beginning of July, NAMAC opened up a national office and now has, for the first time since 1983, permanent staff. As NAMAC now moves into a different gear, the dialogue between staff and board and members is vital to the formation of short- and long-term goals for the organization and for the field. The conference was structured to allow as much dialogue about these future goals as possible. What is high priority is the educating of funders about the media arts. Despite advances over the past 5-7 years, funders are still wary of media arts proposals.

We also need to organize NAMAC members to be an effective political force. As Dee Davis of Appalshop pointed out at our keynote luncheon, we need to stop taking a defensive stance towards the Donald Wildmons of the world and begin to set our agenda for discussions on the arts. Alliances with other organizations, such as the NFLCP, will be critical towards this.

For more information about NAMAC, call (415) 451-2717.

Julian Low
National Director,
National Alliance of
Media Arts Centers



NFLCP folk dashed off a thousand postcards about pending federal legislation to their senators and representatives in a pre-luncheon flurry of writing at the convention.

Volgy Loses Close Race

Community television advocates almost had one of their own in position to be elected to Congress.

Tom Volgy, mayor of Tucson and staunch supporter of community television, came within a 1,000 votes of winning the August 13 Democratic Primary in Arizona, despite being significantly outspent.

NFLCP members contributed almost \$2,000 to his campaign, a fair amount of which was donated by those at the convention.

'91 Convention Popular!

Along with glowing reports from attendees, the numbers also spoke well of the 1991 NFLCP convention in Portland, Oregon.

Voices of Democracy: Celebrating the First Amendment attracted some 800 community television advocates as registrants, and pre-conference workshop registrants numbered more than 200.

Convention logistics were handled by Meeting Points of Portland.

Thank you all!

re-teaching us to accept their lies, to learn to lie to each other and most seriously, even to lie to ourselves about the nature of our own society. I think our challenges include basic transformation of communication systems that could describe as both functional and dysfunctional. They're functional for those who put first the bottom line—those who pursue the corporate profits.

So let's not pretend that this is a totally dysfunctional system. It's not. But in human terms this is an extremely dysfunctional system and the news media are a big part of it. I think we have an opportunity to say, and this is such an inspiring gathering; we're all going to be home around the country doing what we know we need to do. I think in the final analysis I can't think of anything better to conclude with than to say that it's your life, it's your First Amendment. Do with them what you will and as a labor organizer said a long time ago, "Mourn the dead and fight like hell for the living." ■

Maria Rocha

Maria Rocha is an organizer and a hell raiser in the very highest sense of the term. She has a long history of involvement in the Latino community. She is now president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees AFL-CIO in Austin, Texas. In her own union she has used public access television as a powerful tool for educating, for organizing and for energizing others.

I have come here all the way from Austin, Texas, all the way from the trenches where I fight every day for the rights of working people. I've come all the way to Portland, Oregon to meet all of you, to talk to you and to make a plea to you.

First, let me give you a little background. Four years ago, when I became President of AFSCME Local 1624, we were a totally dysfunctional organization. We had staff problems, financial problems, and image problems, of course, that go along with that. We weren't respected, workers had no service and it was a dreadful time for the workers of the city. But now, four years later, we are one of the most powerful political entities in that city.

Without going into all the details, the single most important, most critical element in what we accomplished was public access television, municipal access television. It was critical and essential. It brought us the presence and the credibility that we needed. We were on TV. We were credible.

And most important, we were able to organize our members. We were able to organize new members, because all of a sudden, city and county workers were saying, "That union, it's strong, it's making a difference. It's making things happen. We need to be a part of that, we need to join and talk and make things happen."

I came to this wonderful resource through people, public access workers who were willing to wait, during the weekend, after hours, on their own time, for me to drag in with a promo tape and they bicycled it up to the master control. I was

able to contact a producer who started calling me continually and saying, "I'm going to give you some studio time. You put a show together. Come on! This Saturday, this is it! Come on. Do it." And the municipal access program manager saying, "Let's put a press conference together on the municipal channel. And then let's make it a weekly event and whether you're covered or not by the media, you're on the municipal channel every week and we'll replay you." And then I started hearing the voices from the community and the public: "I saw you. I saw you on TV. Thank you, thank you for fighting for us. We really need that. Hey! Our union's on TV." And then I saw the light. I saw the light and the rest is history.

So now to my plea to you. I fight every day. Every day there's a battle for the workers. And I'm going to ask you, organize us. The same people who dragged me, kicking and screaming to public access, I'm asking you to reach out to the Maria Rocha's in the community and drag them to public access with the techniques and the skills that you've learned and the contacts you've made and new innovative ways that you've come up with. Grab those union people and drag them to public access and organize the environmentalists so that they are having an impact and bring in those civil rights workers so that they can start partaking in this resource.... Organize us so that we can organize each other, ourselves. And together, you wonderful people and our social movements, together we will make social change happen.

I'm going to say goodbye for now but I hope to see all of you again in the trenches, on the battlefield, fighting for social change and I'll wave my banner at you, "Freedom of Speech." Thank you. ■

Herb Schiller

In his work over many years, Herbert I. Schiller has shattered the myth that we Americans live in an open society with a free marketplace of ideas. His work exposes the enormous role corporations play in shaping our culture and communications.

Herb Schiller is Emeritus Professor of Communication at the University of California at San Diego. He has lectured widely throughout the world and written a number of important books, among them Communications and the American Empire, The Mind Managers, and Culture Inc.: The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression.

What I think all of us here are aware but which is still hardly conscious to the rest of our population is the cultural degradation in our society. The degradation of the cultural environment. Already public schools around the country are showing in the classes commercials brought to you by a subsidiary of Time Warner. Another sacred area has succumbed and is succumbing across the nation to the hucksters right into the classroom itself. You go to a museum, a scientific center, and what do you see? Corporate logos on exhibits—science brought to you by TRW, Rockwell and Exxon.

Of course, you of all people are familiar with

what happened to the mandate of public non-commercial television. There is no such animal any longer. First it started very courteously and very discreetly and now it's just a rampant commercialism in our public television. And if you're a sports fan, why, you're not watching sports. You're just watching the most gargantuan kind of commercial enterprise that's imaginable. Coca-Cola is in there and so are some of the other big ones and thereby one enterprise which at one time was an actual human enterprise, a creative enterprise, a skill enterprise all being co-opted.... That's what mean when I talk about corporate despoliation and environmental pollution of the cultural field.

Now in this particular field a very curious paradoxical condition exists. We have recognized that the First Amendment is our defense for freedom of speech; we realize it's still an ideal. We realize all of the violations that have occurred. But we still struggle and we still feel pretty good that we have a First Amendment. But what is observable is this: the First Amendment is our amendment, it's a people's amendment, it's for individual's expression, has been taken and turned around and interpreted through one Supreme Court decision after another, into an amendment that defends what is called euphemistically "corporate speech." Sometimes they call it "commercial speech."

When they break up Dan Rather for a commercial, that's corporate speech. When you go to a ballgame, and then you see the billboards, that's corporate speech. Under increasing interpretations, this corporate speech has been given the protection, not yet totally but well on the way, of the First Amendment. The First Amendment is now being regarded as protecting this kind of speech.... You might say, that just broadens it out, makes it more democratic. Why limit it to us? Why exclude one part of the society? Because this is not a broadening. It is a narrowing, a kind of pressing inward rather than moving outward.

And why is that? Well, there are many reasons but let me just mention one. It's been alluded to here already today. With the new communications technology, with the vast networks and the control of the networks, with the access to satellites, in order for the largest dominate voice to be heard it's got to be backed up by a tremendous amount of funds. And who has the funds? The Fortune 500. So with an interpretation that allows corporate speech to be regarded as equally secure under the First Amendment we find that the voice of the individual creative person, whether a singer, writer, journalist, or broadcaster gets pressed to the margin and the dominate expression is then presented by the corporate interest.

So I would say at this time not only do we have our customary battles, not only do we have the book burners and the people who don't like this idea or that idea being expressed, the people who intimidate librarians for having a book on the shelf. We have those, unfortunately, and plenty of them, but those battles are relatively visible. But this battle has been going on without any real public

recognition of what has happened and so now you see the First Amendment protects us to a degree, without romanticizing it against the abuses of the government. Government control of information. Government intervention, informational dissemination.

Power in our society has continuously been pyramided and concentrated, so that today the real power is not in Congress. We know where the real decisions are made. But the real threat to our society today comes from an area that's not even recognized, not even identified.

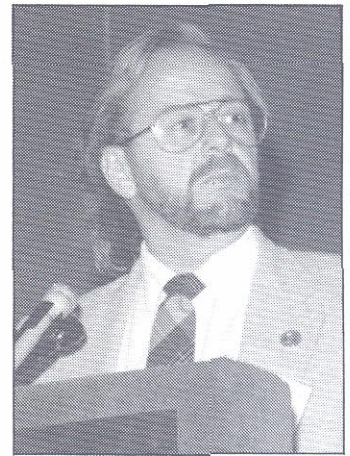
And how would it be identified? Who is going to call it? Who is going to make the various statements? Where is that declaration going to come from? So that is our agenda today. To be able to recognize the transformations in this society and to be able to contest those transformations at a totally new level. Now how do we do that? What do we do about this? Well, the very first thing is to make it known and ask the question. Now how do we do that? Now all of you over the last two or three years have noticed these good faith and enormously red, white and blue identifications of Phillip Morris with the Bill of Rights.

There have been all kinds of commercials on that. You've seen the founding fathers in wig and costume and Phillip Morris saying, "Oh this is our Constitution. Let's defend it." And what is the real message there? What is the, as they say in academic jargon, the subtext? It is our right to give you a message any way we like, to induce you to kill yourself. That's the message. Because, Phillip Morris, we know what they are producing and what they are selling but they give us the other message, "Let's defend the Bill of Rights" but they're talking about a very different Bill of Rights.

They are talking about this new interpretation which says, "Yes, we have the right to make any kind of a message we like and that's defended under the Constitution." That doesn't necessarily mean we have to say you can't express anything at all if you're a corporation but we have to begin to be able to make our choices, to make our careful, distinguishing points of what is a legitimate message and what is not a legitimate message.

Wouldn't it be nice to have our political leadership propose a tax in this society, a tax on advertising and that tax would be given exclusively to independent television workers and groups so that they can begin to mount the kind of a rejoinder that at this time goes unresponded to. But I think it's time to allow the creative forces in this society to get full expression and to begin to limit the forces that themselves, although they like to don the garb of openness and freedom and full expression, are basically concerned with pressing their own partisan interests.

Well that is our job. To redeem our past. To expand our present, and to make the future a little bit more tolerable for a truly open creative spirit and a full expression which at the present time is so narrow, so weak, so attenuated that most of us cringe. Thank you. ■



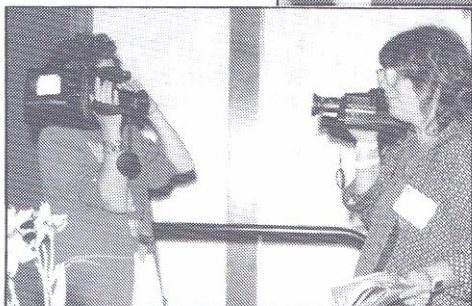
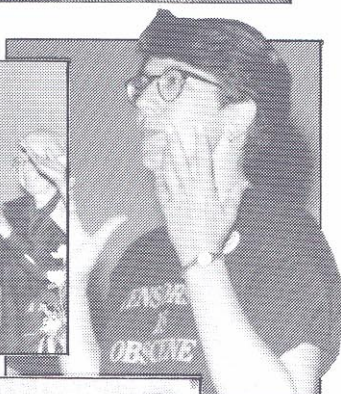
"I think it's crucial that we use the First Amendment, that we use whatever we can to give expression and visibility to the hate messages that are in our society, to expose them to the light of day...Bring the debate into the light of day and when the full supremacist agenda is exposed, it won't be accepted. When bigotry is exposed, then people are challenged to face up to it and make some choices in an opposite direction."

*Bill Wassmuth
Executive Director,
Northwest Coalition Against
Malicious Harassment
Voices of Democracy Presenter
at the 1991 Convention*

Presenters' Videotape Available

Unedited videotapes of the Voices of Democracy Symposium held this summer at the national convention are available from the national office. Included are the four presenters as well as Chalan master drummer Obo Addy and video testimonials with perspectives on freedom of speech and democracy from people throughout the US.

For more information, contact the NFLCP at PO Box 27290, Washington, DC 20038-7290, or call (202) 393-2650.



Thanks for the Memories

Outgoing NFLCP chairperson Sharon Ingraham received the thanks of all for her efforts in seeing the organization through rough times the past four years, shown at top receiving congratulations from George Stoney and below that from Sharon Mooney and T. Andrew Lewis. Reginald Carter, center left, was thanked for his past efforts at the national office in the absence of an executive director, while convention goers had an opportunity to screen the new feature film *Emma and Elvis*, which had Access 30 Dayton as its fictional setting, and talk with filmmaker Julia Reichert (center right) about the project. Camcorders were prevalent, as evidenced by the one on one interview above between Dee Dee Halleck (right) and another attendee.

The NFLCP is pleased to announce the winners in the 1991 Hometown USA Video Festival.

Each year more and more community responsive programming is produced and cablecast on access and local origination channels, and each year the quantity and quality of Hometown entries increases.

The 1991 Hometown Video Festival winners were announced July 25 during a special Awards Night Ceremony held at the Portland Performing Arts Center in conjunction with the NFLCP National Convention.

Congratulations Hometown Winners!

Single programs are indicated with the Δ symbol, and series programming with a > .

ABOUT PUBLIC ACCESS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Rob Carver, Rogers Comm. 4/Vancouver East NTV, *Your Community Channel*, Vancouver, BC

ABOUT PUBLIC ACCESS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Ted Grady, T-VHUE 3, *Access Net*, Dayton, OH

BEST ACCESS PROMO-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Laura Hutchens et al, Miami Valley Cable Council, *Todd & Laura LIVE at the Alter*, Centerville, OH

> Dave Gordon, Miami Valley Cable Council, *MVCC Promos*, Centerville, OH

BEST ACCESS PROMO-VOLUNTEER

Δ Larry J. Reynolds, Cincinnati Community Video, *Community Report Rap*, Cincinnati, OH

> Bill Guandolo et al, Raleigh Cable Access, *Rob & Bill's Talk Show*, Raleigh, NC

BEST LO PROMO-PROFESSIONAL ???

Δ Alan Taffel, Selkirk Communications, *Kids View Audition Promo*, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

> Patrick Bryant, Cox Cable University City, Inc., *L.O. Promotions*, Gainesville, FL

> James J. Donnelly, Whaling City Cable TV

Parents and Babies, New Bedford, MA

> James Lindenberger, Tampa Educational Cable Consortium, *Best Local Origination Promo*, Tampa, FL

BEST LO PROMO-VOLUNTEER ???

Δ Larry J. Reynolds, *Community Report Rap*, Cincinnati, OH

> Richard Vision, Rubacher, *Thirty Minutes*, Hercules, CA

DOCUMENTARY PUBLIC AWARENESS-PROFESSIONAL SER???

Δ Kathy Cleaver, Cablevision of Boston/Brookline, *Censorship, Obscenity & Free Speech*, Brookline, MA

Δ Marla Kreps, *Community Access Television*, Industry, CA

Δ Lauren Mohler et al, Selkirk Communications, *Broward's Meet The Press*, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Δ Bob Sykes, City of Lakewood, *Crime Stoppers: The Savage Cycle*, Lakewood, CA

DOCUMENTARY PUBLIC AWARENESS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Eric Stachon, Multnomah Cable Access, *Deadly Secrets: Untold Story of Trojan*, Portland, OR

DOCUMENTARY EVENT-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Steve Zeltzer, Labor Video Project, *Hanging Iron*, San Francisco, CA

DOCUMENTARY EVENT-VOLUNTEER

Δ TH Brooks, Cincinnati Community Video, *Mapplethorpe in Cincinnati*, Cincinnati, OH

DOCUMENTARY PROFILE-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Ann Balderston-Glynn, Cablevision Systems Corp, *Unsung Heroes*, Hicksville, NY

DOCUMENTARY PROFILE-VOLUNTEER

Δ Chriss Filzen, Metro Cable, *Parade with the Beast*, Minneapolis, MN

EDUCATIONAL-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Joan Phipps, Richmond Public Schools, *The Answer People #45*, Richmond, VA

> Jan Morrow, Springfield Community Access Network, *Baking Illinois*, Springfield, IL

EDUCATIONAL-VOLUNTEER

Δ Janet E. Christian, Waterford Cable Commission, *Mott White-out Day*, Waterford, MI

> Shannon Miller et al, GHS-TV, *Germantown News and Views*, Germantown, TN

ENTERTAINMENT-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Sheldon Gleisser, A.C.T.V., *Teller's Ticket*, Columbus, OH

> Josh Hall, Channel 23, *Altitude Sickness*, Avon, CO

ENTERTAINMENT-VOLUNTEER

Δ Jim Barrett et al, Cupertino Community TV, *Laugh Tracks*, San Jose, CA

> Christopher Nielsen, Cable Access St. Paul, *Nite Life*, St. Paul, MN

ETHNIC EXPRESSION-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Rick Maultra, TV 16, *Hoosier History/IN Greek Immigrants*, Indianapolis, IN

> Eduardo Lopez, Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, *Linea Directa*, Washington, DC

ETHNIC EXPRESSION-VOLUNTEER

Δ Barbara A. Wike, Piscataway Community TV Center, *African-American Women: Yesterday et al*, Piscataway, NJ

> Arvindkumar Parikh, Cox Cable, *This is India*, New Orleans, LA

FREE SPEECH MINUTE-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Jacqueline Schommer, Tualatin Valley Community Access, *I've Got Something To Say*, Troutdale, OR

FREE SPEECH MINUTE-VOLUNTEER

Δ Craig Bryant, Community Access Television, *Children Speak*, Industry, CA

INFORMATIONAL-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Paul LeValley, Carroll Community Television, *What Will Happen When I'm Gone?*, Westminster, MD

> Linda Lewett, Fairfax County Dept. of Consumer Affairs, *Consumer Focus*, Fairfax, VA

INFORMATIONAL-VOLUNTEER

Δ Ben Davis, Austin Community TV, *Mice, Men, Machines*, Austin, TX

> Elaine Edelman, CSW, **Mental Health Report W/E. Edelman**, Brooklyn, NY

INNOVATIVE-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Brian K. Murphy, City TV of Santa Monica, **Berlin Zoo**, Santa Monica, CA
> Erin O'Meara, M.A.T.A., "2x4", Milwaukee, WI

INNOVATIVE-VOLUNTEER

Δ Kathie Dube-Noland, Pasadena Comm. Television, **Decoupage! with Summer Caprice!**, Pasadena, CA
> Kathie Dube-Noland, Pasadena Community Television, **Decoupage**, Pasadena, CA

INSTRUCTIONAL/TRAINING-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Banning Lary, Austin Community TV, **Childproof: Home Safety Checklist**, Austin, TX
> John A. Connell, Cablevision of Long Island, **The Cable Easel**, Hauppauge, NY

INSTRUCTIONAL/TRAINING-VOLUNTEER

Δ Celetta Sanders, Arlington Comm. TV, **Are You Following Me?**, McLean, VA
> Kevin English, SCTV-3, **Ten to Rock**, Staten Island, NY

INTERNATIONAL-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Jorge E. Monzon, Access Sacramento, **The Flying Samaritans**, Sacramento, CA
> Steve Pierce, Deep Dish TV, **Will Be Televised: Video Documents**, NYC, NY

INTERNATIONAL-VOLUNTEER

Δ Marcela Kingman, Mnpls. TV Network, **Chile: A New Awareness**, Wayzata, MN
> A. Parikh, Cox Cable, **This is India**, New Orleans, LA

LIVE-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Laura Hutchens, Miami Valley Cable Council, **Todd & Laura LIVE at the Alter**, Centerville, OH
> Deborah Pitstick, Dayton Public Schools Television, **Math Homework Hotline**, Dayton, OH

LIVE-VOLUNTEER

Δ Glenn Lewis, Fairfax Cable Access, **Law Weekly**, Washington, DC
> Ken Knisely, Arlington Community TV, **No Dogs or Philosophers Allowed**, Arlington, VA

LOCAL NEWS-PROFESSIONAL

> David Kiser, Northwest Community Television, **Northwest Edition**, Brooklyn Park, MN

LOCAL NEWS-VOLUNTEER

> Craig Bryant, Community Access Television, **C.A.T. News**, Industry, CA

MAGAZINE FORMAT-PROFESSIONAL

> Maurice J. Bresnahan, Continental Cablevision, **Lead Story**, Lawrence, MA
> Rene Blatte, City of Rochester Hills, **Rochester Hills Mag.**, Rochester Hills, MI
> Lorna Johnson, Deep Dish TV, **Greenscreen: Grassroots Views**, NY, NY
> John Richardson, Rogers Community 4, **Friends & Lovers**, Vancouver, BC

MAGAZINE FORMAT-VOLUNTEER

> Jesikah Ross, Davis Comm. TV, **What's With the Women?**, Davis, CA

Hometown USA Video Festival 1991



MUNICIPAL-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Alida Thacher, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, **First In...When Seconds Count**, Aloha, OR
> Robin Smith, City/Beverly Hills, Video Service Dept., **Badge of Safety**, Beverly Hills, CA

MUNICIPAL-VOLUNTEER

Δ John C. Landis, Marysville-Planning for Your Future, Everett, WA
> Jim Francis, West Hartford Community Television, **Inside Town Hall**, West Hartford, CT

MUSIC VIDEO-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Randy Riesen, TCI of Illinois, "Sometimes" **The Millions**, Mt. Prospect, IL

MUSIC VIDEO-VOLUNTEER

Δ Laurel Greenberg, Boston Neighborhood Network, **Something Missing**, Boston Network, Brighton, MA

ORIGINAL TELEPLAY-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Connie Speer et al, Irving Community TV Network, **Irving Peaks**, Irvine, TX

ORIGINAL TELEPLAY-VOLUNTEER

Δ Tom Spray, TCI Cable, **A Dishwasher's Daydream**, Portland, OR

OVERALL EXCELLENCE-EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

Kathryn Grider, SECC, **Overall Excellence Educational Access**, Sacramento, CA

OVERALL EXCELLENCE-GOVERNMENT ACCESS

Linda Price, City of Lakewood, **Overall Excellence Government**, Lakewood, CA

OVERALL EXCELLENCE-LOCAL ORIGINATION

Paul Wahlstrom, Irving Community Television Network, **ICTN Demo Tape**, Irving, TX

OVERALL PUBLIC ACCESS-PROFESSIONAL

Randy VanDalsen, Access Sacramento, **Overall Excellence Public Access**, Sacramento, CA

PERFORMING ARTS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Brian K. Murphy, City TV of Santa Monica, **Berlin Zoo**, Santa Monica, CA
> Jonathan Meltzer, Cablevision of Boston/Brookline, **Dance Umbrella Presents**, Brookline, MA

PERFORMING ARTS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Chris Pitts et al, Bloomfield Community Television, **Jazzmasters: Keepers of the Flame**, Bloomfield Hills, MI
> Diana Stagnato, Fairfax Cable Access, **Rockit! Rockit!**, Occoquan, VA

PROGRAMMING BY SENIORS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Dorothy Jund et al, City of Coon Rapids, **Seniors Off Their Rockers**, Coon Rapids, MN

> Lee Murray, United Cable/Oakland County, **Senior Focus**, Detroit, MI

PROGRAMMING BY SENIORS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Jacqueline Paul, CenCom, **Sharing is Caring**, Sausalito, CA
> Catherine Priskorn, Dearborn Seniors Video Club, **Senior Glances**, Dearborn, MI

PROGRAMMING BY YOUTH-VOLUNTEER

Δ Abby Mulligan, George R. Martin School, **Billy Bat & the Cloud of Lights**, Seekonk, MA

> Denise Zaccardi, Community Television Network, **Hard Cover**, Chicago, IL

PROGRAMMING FOR SENIORS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Robin Gee, City of LA/Dept of Telecommunications, **Walk on the Safe Side**, Los Angeles, CA
> Frank Singer, Southfield/Lathrup Cable Commission, **S.O.S.-Spotlite on Seniors**, Southfield, MI

PROGRAMMING FOR SENIORS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Dorothy L. Benner, Continental Cable, **Something Different-Rocky**, Whitman, MA

> Catherine Priskorn, Dearborn Seniors Video Club, **Senior Glances**, Dearborn, MI

PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Jamie Smith, City of Rochester Hills, **Project: Pedestrian**, Rochester Hills, MI
> Brian Aungst, Vision Cable of Pinellas, Inc., **Kids' Place**, Clearwater, FL

PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH-VOLUNTEER

Δ James Clements, Continental Cablevision, **The Firebird**, Arlington, MA
> Claire Mix, c/o Access Los Altos, **The Curiosity Stop**, Los Gatos Hills, CA

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Angela Cochran, Multnomah Community Television, **Girl Scout Rap**, Gresham, OR
> Jennifer Harper, Cox Cable Oklahoma City, **Opening Night Button Campaign**, Oklahoma City, OK

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Deborah Pitstick, Dayton Public Schools TV, **Chin-Puppet Rap**, Dayton, OH
> Donald Iarussi, BCTV, **Rape Awareness PSA's**, Brooklyn, NY

RELIGIOUS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Cynthia Ramirez, Public Access Center, **Laredo Today**, Laredo, TX
> Steve Manning, Allen County Public Library/Access Ctr, **Contemporary Christian Music Videos**, Ft. Wayne, IN

RELIGIOUS-VOLUNTEER

Δ John M. Lyons, Continental Cablevision, **Holiday Greetings from Quincy Churches**, Quincy, MA
> Harold Scott, Knoxville Community TV, **Guidelines**, Knoxville, TN
> Rev. Bill Bowler, T.C.C.C., **Pastors Study**, Tucson, AZ
> Anthony Stefanini, Access Bellingham, **Reach Out**, Bellingham, WA

SPORTS-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Suzanne Peppers, Access Sacramento, **The Act Games**, Sacramento, CA
> John A. Connell, Cablevision of Long Island, **Cablevision's Long Island Sports Network**, Hauppauge, NY

SPORTS-VOLUNTEER

Δ Kevin Kuehe, Cincinnati Community TV, **The 1990 Clermont Classic Triathlon**, Cincinnati, OH
> Jim Newman, HOM-TV, **Meridian Magazine Sports**, Okemos, MI

TALK SHOW-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Liz Engel, Rogers Community 4, **Vancouver Focus**, Vancouver, BC
> David Dreety, Access-30 Dayton, **V.A.N. News**, Dayton, OH

TALK SHOW-VOLUNTEER

Δ Ken Knisely, Arlington Community Television, **No Dogs or Philosophers Allowed**, Arlington, VA
> Ken Knisely, Arlington Community TV, **No Dogs or Philosophers Allowed**, Arlington, VA

VIDEO ART-PROFESSIONAL

Δ Jill Petzell, Chicago Access Corp., **November Nine**, St. Louis, MO

VIDEO ART-VOLUNTEER

Δ Patricia Leahy, Multnomah Cable Access, **Escapes II**, Gresham, OR



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